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FLEXIBLE TRACKWAY

Ralph Sadleir Falkiner, Melbourne, Australia

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1 Claim. (Cl. 305—10)

This invention has for its prime object the provision of a flexible track or railway for trailers and similar vehicles, which track shall be of simple construction, comparatively inexpensive to manufacture, and at the same time highly effective in accomplishing its functions. I shall describe in the ensuing specification embodiments of my invention and shall point out the novel features thereof in claim.

In the accompanying drawings:

Fig. 1 is a view in side elevation showing a trailer cart equipped with an embodiment of my invention.

Figs. 2 and 3 are inner plan views showing adjacent links of the trackway in different relative positions.

Fig. 4 is a fragmentary view in side elevation, partly in vertical section, and on an enlarged scale, showing in further detail the relation of the trackway to a wheel to which the trackway is applied.

Fig. 5 is a detail vertical sectional view of one of the links.

Fig. 6 is a detail sectional view on line 6—6 of Fig. 5.

Fig. 7 is a detail view showing a blank from which a link is cut out.

Fig. 8 is a detail view illustrating the manner of assembly of the links.

Fig. 9 is a detail view showing a modified form of the invention.

Fig. 10 is a detail view showing a further modification.

Fig. 11 is a detail view showing still another modification, and

Fig. 12 is a sectional view of a detail, taken on line 12—12 of Fig. 1.

Referring to the drawings, there is shown at 2 a cart or trailer, such as is commonly employed for transporting sugar cane from the fields to the mill, said carts being also used as trailers attached to harvesting machines. Such carts are usually provided with three wheels 3, 4, and 5 on each side, the main axle of the cart being shown at 6, and the axles of the wheels 3, 5, on each side of the wheel 4 being mounted in a member 7 pivotally supported on said main axle. Such arrangement is conventional and well-known in the art.

My trackway 8 is made up of links 9 each of which may be identical with every other. Said links are of sheet metal and each comprises a main body portion 9', an end portion 10 rolled over to form a pintle, and an opposite end portion 11 rolled over to form an element for re-

ceiving the pintle 10 of an adjacent link. Each link further includes side portions 12, 12 turned substantially at right angles to the main body portion. The end portions of the sides 12, 12 adjacent the pintle receiving element 11 of each link are shown spread laterally outwardly away from the main body portion 9' of the link as indicated at 13, 13; and between said laterally extending end portions are received the end portions of the adjoining link adjacent the pintle 10 of the latter. Said portions 13, 13 have punched or otherwise formed therefrom near their ends laterally inwardly extending projections 14, 14. The end portions of the sides 12, 12 adjacent the pintle 10 have parts thereof below said pintle bent or pressed laterally inwardly as indicated at 15, 15 and the latter have punched or otherwise formed therefrom laterally outwardly extending projections 16, 16. The respective projections 14, 16 by their engagement with each other, limit relative angular movement in one direction between adjacent links as will be apparent from Figs. 2, 3, and 4. Relative angular movement of adjacent links in the other direction is limited by the engagement of the end 11' of the pintle receiving element 11 of one link with the under side of the body portion 9' of the adjoining link.

It will be noted that the pintle 10 and pintle receiving element 11 of adjoining links provide effectively for flexibly connecting the links together without the necessity of providing separate hinge pins and at the same time maintain close contact with each other in their various relative angular relations so that entry of dirt, or pieces of rock or gravel or the like, between adjacent links is prevented. At the same time the links may be made expeditiously and economically from sheet metal. Thus, in Fig. 7 there is shown a sheet metal strip 17 from which a blank for the forming of a link has been cut or stamped out as indicated at 18. The ends of the blank may then be readily rolled to form the pintle 10 and pocket 11. As shown in Fig. 8, similar blanks with their ends formed into pintles 10 and pockets 11 may be readily shifted into assembled relation to each other by sliding the pintle of one into the receiving loop or pocket 11 of the other; the sides 12 being thereafter turned through 90° into their final positions and suitably formed with the lateral portions and projections hereinbefore described. The sides 12 of each link are shown cut away as at 12' so that they will not project beyond the outer surface of the main body portion of